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Carlyle used it in "hero-worship." Dr. Hozumi says: "If ancestor-worship is, as maintained in this book, the extension of love and respect to distant forefathers, the manifestation of this love and respect in a certain harmless way may be regarded as a realization of the Fifth Commandment to honor the parents."

The points discussed in the preceding paragraphs might have been treated in greater detail; but they seem to be sufficiently established by what has been written. The hand of the dead is still heavy in Japan, because the family is the social unit and is dominated by ancestor-worship, formal or informal. Percival Lowell has said that "the

Empire is one great family; the family is a little empire." But the imperial despotism of the family has been weakened considerably by the increased and increasing power given to the individual. The unwritten law of long-established social customs may hold its own for some time against the written laws of the new codes. But the social customs are gradually changing under the influence of individualistic ideas and will come into harmony with the legal enactments. The individual will honor his father and mother and ancestors, and will also himself receive due honor. The dead will be found to be less useful than the living in Japan.

THE MYSTICISM OF JESUS AND OF PAUL

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Professor Buckham's discussion is timely. We are in danger of coming to regard the New Testament as a mere field of criticism. How vast a mistake that would be! Let us come back more earnestly to a vitally religious point of view and see that whatever we may learn about Jesus and Paul, they and their own experiences of God are immeasurably precious.

I

It is a question of very pressing and vital moment how far Christianity is a mystical religion. To answer it we must first go back to its founder and his earliest interpreters. Unless the spirit and principles of mysticism are found in Jesus we cannot rightly call Christianity a mystical religion. If mysticism is an alien strain inducted into the religion of

Jesus it cannot command the unreserved support of his disciples.

When we approach Jesus with the measuring wand of mysticism, we are not left long in doubt as to the positive character of the result. Evidences of the presence of the mystical in Jesus are undeniable, even in the Synoptic Gospels. One can hardly think of him at all without feeling his intimate mystic sense

of the Divine Presence. He seems to have lived enwrapped and infilled with the consciousness of God as the very habit and atmosphere of his mind. His hours alone on the mountain and in the desert and garden his disciples recognized as sacred seasons of communion with his Father. His words reveal the reality of this communion, in their very reserve as well as in their disclosures. Of all God-enveloped and impelled men, Jesus stands foremost, so close in his vital intimacy with God that generations of his followers have agreed with his immediate disciples in giving him the title, the Son of God, and have found that none too daring a saying: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son."

Jesus' attitude toward truth is also distinctly mystical. He teaches that God is known immediately, by inner vision. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And, as if to show that the inner eye is to him only a symbol, he makes similar appeal to the inner ear. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The childlike heart is requisite for entering the kingdom. It is a kingdom of mysteries, which it is given unto the disciple to know. Things hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed to its initiates. He has mystic visions—Satan falling as lightning from heaven—sudden floods and sunbursts of rejoicing; "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit."

Nature is seen by Jesus in a mystical light. The seed, the tree, the flower, the bird are bearers of divine meanings and messages. Indications, sometimes clear and definite, sometimes subtle and suggestive, of Jesus' sensitiveness to the spiritual side of nature are giving rise to

such tender and beautiful interpretations of his nature mysticism as Lanier's "Ballad of Trees and the Master."

Parable and paradox, the two methods by which Jesus unveils the mysteries of the kingdom, are both essentially mystical methods of teaching truth. Both suggest a meaning "far more deeply interfused." With the importance of the parable in Jesus' teaching we have long been familiar, but the significance of his constant use of paradox is just beginning to make its due impression. Chesterton has emphasized it by means of his customary brilliant use of the same method. The late Professor Castor, one of the foremost of the younger New Testament scholars of America, left as his principal contribution to New Testament interpretation a striking paper upon this subject, published in the *Biblical World*, in July, 1912, in which, after quoting from Chesterton, he writes:

Through the very texture of the teaching of Jesus runs this paradoxical element. The gospels bristle with contradictions. Any careful reader who looks there for moral guidance finds himself confronted with two radically different attitudes toward life. Side by side with a renunciation of the world, as stern as that of an Indian yogi, is a childlike joy in life as simple as that of which Wordsworth sang. . . . The example of Jesus is an everlasting witness to us that the two sides may be harmonized in personal experience without neglecting either phase. His life was, as Chesterton saw, a superhuman paradox where opposite passions blazed side by side. The moral supremacy of Jesus is not in any merely negative sinlessness but in the perfect balance of these great antinomies of character.

It is only the mystic who dares to trust paradox as Jesus trusted it, because it is only he who fully realizes the limitless and ultimate harmony of truth.

The central place of *love* in Jesus' character and teaching is the final evidence of his mysticism. He makes love the culminating commandment, as well as the spring and motive of his sacrificial life. Here, as Professor Castor points out, is the solution of his paradoxes. Here, too, is the secret of his power. He loved greatly. Mysticism can claim no monopoly of love, but it can claim reliance upon love, "the love of love," as a characteristic mystical doctrine and practice, and in this Jesus was pre-eminent.

That Jesus was deeply and vitally mystical, then, can hardly be open to question. As Burkitt has finely said, "It is not as a philosopher, but as a Prometheus that we worship Christ—the man who came down from heaven to give men the Divine Fire."¹ And yet, when the direct question is asked: "Was Jesus a *mystic*?" one hesitates to put the label upon him, just as one hesitates to put any label upon him. He is too great to be classified. He was quite as great ethically as mystically. One might call him an *ethic*, just as truly as a mystic, so intensely ethical was his life and teaching. Indeed here is one great secret of the supremacy of Jesus; he united, as no other has ever done, mysticism and ethics, morality and religion. And one should add that in him both were thoroughly rational. It was a mystic, yet far more and greater than a mystic, who being lifted up draws all men unto himself.

Thus Jesus affords us the most normal mysticism in the entire history of religion. It has a depth and strength and steadiness that cannot be paralleled. It is non-ascetic, non-speculative, non-ecstatic. One saying, alone, of his is sufficient to indicate the extraordinary poise and normality of his mind: "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Here are parable, paradox, ethic, rationality, mysticism condensed in a single sentence replete with both common-sense and super-sense, sagacity and charity.

The eschatological strain in Jesus, if it were as controlling as Schweitzer and others would have us believe, would indeed enhance the mystical element in him but at the cost of sanity. It would yield not only an *interim* ethics but an *interim* mysticism, neither of which is true to the firmer lines of the portrait drawn in the gospels.

II

Since there was so much of the mystical element in Jesus it need not surprise us to find even more in his first and greatest interpreter. Paul was an amazingly many-sided man. It is not strange, therefore, that other sides, particularly the dogmatic and argumentative, have obscured that deeper quality in which we are now beginning to find the real secret of his personality—the mystical. The recent turning of New Testament students toward "Paul the Mystic" is perhaps the most significant step in New Testament study. It opens the way toward a profounder and more spiritual conception of Christianity than the church has ever reached.

¹ *The Interpreter*, IX, No. 1, p. 35.

The present emphatic recognition of the mystical element in Paul was anticipated by James M. Campbell in his discerning volume, *Paul the Mystic*, and to a certain degree by Weinel in his *Paul*, in which he quotes Nietzsche's comparison of Paul and Madam Guyon. Even Johannes Weiss, in his *Preaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God*, admits that in Paul "the eschatological tension is strongly counterbalanced by his Christ mysticism." But it remained for Reitzenstein, Adolf Deissman, Kirsopp Lake, and especially Percy Gardner, to bring out more clearly the mysticism of the great apostle, particularly in its relation to the mystery religions of his time. Deissman calls the apostle "ein Klassiker der Mystik und der nüchternste Praktiker zugleich." Lake, in his *The Earlier Epistles of Paul*, does not discuss the mysticism of Paul so much as that of Christianity itself, which he pronounces a mystery religion. "Christianity has not borrowed from the mystery religions because it was always, at least in Europe, a mystery religion itself."¹

Professor Gardner, in his *The Religious Experience of Saint Paul*, after tracing the relations of Paulinism to the mystery religions, concludes:

Thus the Christianity of Paul is impressed and deeply impressed by many of the marks which are regarded by modern critics as the most noteworthy characteristics of the mystic cults of the Hellenic world.²

He points out, however, the following important distinction:

We have no reason to think that those who claimed salvation through Isis or

Mithras were much better than their neighbors. They felt secure of the help of their patron deity in the affairs of life and of the future world; but they did not therefore live at a higher level. But in the view of Paul those who became part of the body of Christ put off all sin and evil doing. The spirit of Christ dwelt in them, leading them to all things pure and lovely and of good report.³

These brief allusions to the recent literature of Paulinism will serve to indicate how general and full of import is the present emphasis upon the mysticism of Paul. Not that the older insistence upon his intellectualism has been abandoned, or that eschatologists, like Sweitzer, have ceased to claim him. But Reitzenstein carries our conviction with him when, in reply to Sweitzer, he says of Paul:

In his mysticism, in the absolute surrender of his whole being and life, I feel there is a depth of personal love which I cannot explain adequately on psychological principles, by mere messianic hopes and an eschatological idea.⁴

III

Turning now to a closer study of the apostle for ourselves, we find in him three very striking evidences of mysticism. The first is his recognition of distinct grades, or stages, of spiritual truth. Beginning his work in Corinth, he determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. But this, he proceeds to state with all the clarity and vigor which characterize him, is not the deeper truth (wisdom) which he has for full-grown men. The higher wisdom is a hidden mystery,

¹ P. 215.

² P. 89.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴ *Zeitschrift für neuestestamentliche Wissenschaft.*

foreordained before the worlds unto our glory. Then follows that remarkable passage on the nature and revelation of spiritual truth which will ever remain the most profound and luminous word upon the subject in literature, closing:

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The second evidence of mysticism is one of less intrinsic worth, but absolutely conclusive for the psychologist, i.e., Paul's susceptibility to vision, or "trance." Besides that of his conversion, the principal experience of this kind which the apostle relates is that found in the twelfth chapter of the second letter to the Corinthians. So typically mystical is this experience, with its loss of consciousness, its ecstasy, its unspeakable words, that it at once places Paul indubitably among the mystics. Yet we shall do well to remember that such "incursions" are far too subordinate and isolated in Paul's self-revelation to color very greatly the deeper and saner mystical experience of which they are but incidents.

Richest and most characteristic by far, as an expression of Paul's mysticism, is the experience, so fundamental and determinative in his life and thought, of the Christ "mystery."¹ What did the apostle mean by the gospel *mystery* to which he refers with so much confidence and reverence? Gardner interprets it as follows:

The mystery of Paul was a sacred but secret belief in the existence of a spiritual bond holding together a society in union with a spiritual Lord, with whom the society has communion and from whom they received in the present life safety from sin and defilement, and in the world to come life everlasting.²

Doubtless this is a true account of Paul's mystery as far as it goes. But is this all? The "mystery" is something more than a belief. The "bond" impresses most readers of Paul as more intimate than this and as primarily individual and only secondarily social. Dr. McGiffert comes nearer to the heart of the apostle's mystery when he says of it, "The result of the divine indwelling is not simply union but identity. It is not that the man and Christ are brought into intimate association, but that they become one."³ But even this interpretation fails to represent the full idea of mystery which is in the apostle's mind when he writes of what "has been hid from the ages and generations but now is made manifest, which is Christ in you the hope of glory." Does he not thus imply an unrecognized Christ indwelling in devout souls as such—the soul of goodness at the very core of their selfhood—now at last in the end of the ages identified, interpreted, fulfilled, in the revelation of Jesus Christ? At all events this is a conception which we find prevailing among many of the later Christian mystics. How far they drew it from Paul, how far from Platonism or Stoicism, how far from their own speculative insight, it is difficult to tell.

¹I Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:27; Eph. 1:9; 3:9.

²*The Religious Experience of Saint Paul*, p. 79.

³"Mysticism in the Early Church," *American Journal of Theology*, XI, No. 3, p. 407.

William Law, for one, connects this mystic conception of Christ with the teaching of Paul. In his *Spirit of Prayer* he writes:

It is the language of Scripture that Christ in us is our hope of glory, that Christ formed in us—living, growing, and raising his own Life and Spirit in us—is our only Salvation.

Contrasting this with the conventional idea he continues:

For this holy Jesus that is to be formed in thee, that is to be the Savior and new Life of thy soul, that is to raise thee out of the darkness of death into the light of Life, and give thee power to become a son of God, is already within thee, living, stirring, calling, knocking at the door of thy heart.

Doubtless there is a temptation, against which we should be on guard, to press the implications of this Christ mystery of Paul too far; yet we cannot blind ourselves to its limitless suggestiveness.

The mysticism of Paul differs from that of Jesus. It is less calm and clear and steady. It is less closely associated with nature. It is more speculative and vehement. But it shares the same spirit and principles. It is kindled at the same altar. In fact, it is so closely attached to Christ that it unites him, as a revealing personality, with the Father and Spirit as source and object of mystic knowledge and faith, and thus guides and influences the entire development of Christian mysticism.

THE SONG OF SONGS—A SECULAR POEM

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The fascination of Canticles for students of Hebrew literature is evidenced by the large library of expository works that has grown up around it, and the scores of interpretations that have been put forward in the effort to explain it. These many interpretations fall into two classes, allegorical and literal. The former are now given up by Protestant scholars, and need detain us but a moment. The allegorical treatment of the Song began among the Jews as early as the first century of the Christian era. They believed that it set forth the love of Jehovah for Israel, and ultimately

that the whole history of the chosen people could be discovered in its pages. I have tried to picture to myself the man who first devised this reading of the Song of Songs. He must have been something of a recluse, narrowly ecclesiastical in his mental habits, unused to secular ways of thinking, convinced that the Jews are God's favorites, habituated to the thought of God as Israel's wedded Lord and Lover, familiar with the subterfuge of allegorical interpretation, hopeless of accounting for the supposed Solomonic authorship of the book in any other way, and quite destitute of a sense